

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 131805Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7808

INFO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

S E C R E T TEGUCIGALPA 3412

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1-DECALS INDETERMINABLE

TAGS: PFOR, ES, HO

SUBJECT: HONDURAS/SALVADOR TALKS

SUMMARY: BATRES SAYS THAT OPPOSITION GROUP (POLITICAL PARTIES) WILL SOON START PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN TO DISRUPT TALKS WITH SALVADOR. HE FEARS THIS MIGHT INFLUENCE GOES NEGATIVELY. OUR TALKS WITH GOH MILITARY INDICATE THEIR SUPPORT FOR NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. FONMIN BATRES INFORMED US ON AUGUST 9 THAT HE HAD LEARNED DISSIDENT POLITICAL PARTIES WERE PLANNING CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT NEW ROUND OF TALKS WITH SALVADOR. HE SEEMED TO THINK THEY WOULD RESUME OLD LINE PUSHED DURING LAST YEAR'S MEXICAN TALKS, I.E. THAT "DE FACTO" GOH LACKED CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY TO RATIFY ANY NEW BORDER ARRANGEMENT. HE EXPRESSED APPREHENSION THAT THIS TYPE OF PROPAGANDA MIGHT NEGATIVELY AFFECT THE SALVADORAN NEGOTIATORS BY GIVING THEM THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE WAS NO NATIONAL BACKING FOR GOH ON THIS ISSUE. MEANWHILE, TALKS WOULD RESUME ON TECHNICAL LEVEL IN GUATEMALA.

2. DCM HAS DISCUSSED MILITARY ATTITUDES OVER PAST WEEK WITH C/S COL. HERNANDEZ, PAYMASTER GENERAL COL. CELIO CASTRO AND MAJOR LEONEL GUTIERREZ OF GENERAL STAFF. ALL ARE REASONABLY HOPEFUL, BASING THEIR OPTIMISM ON WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN ATTITUDE ON PART OF SALVADORAN MILITARY. THEIR NEWLY WON PERCEPTIONS ARE STILL SOMEWHAT UNFORMED, BUT THEY INCLUDE HOPE

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THAT SALVADORANS ARE THEMSELVES BECOMING PERSUADED OF ADVANTAGES

IN CLEARLY ESTABLISHED BORDER.

3. COMMENT: WE CONTINUE TO THINK THAT GENERALIZED OPPOSITION
CAVILS AT GOH NEGOTIATIONS WILL HAVE MINIMAL IMPACT DOMESTICALLY,
DUE TO
WIDESPREAD POPULAR DESIRE TO DELINEATE FRONTIER.
"CONSTITUTIONALITY" ARGUMENT IS NOT VERY PERSUASIVE.
POTENTIALLY MORE TROUBLESOME HOWEVER, WOULD BE ATTACKS THAT
BATRES IS "ENTREGUISTA" FOR CONSIDERING FACTORS (E.G. OCCUPATION)
OTHER THAN HISTORICAL DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE AS BASIS FOR DETERMINING
LINE. THIS ARGUMENT MIGHT APPEAL TO NARROW LEGALISM WHICH IS
SO PREVALENT AMONG HONDURAN LAWYERS AS GROUP. THERE ARE BY
NOW SOME STILL UNCLEAR INDICATIONS THAT MEMBERS OF GOH NEGOTIATING
TEAM MAY BE LEAKING DETAILS TO THE NATIONALIST PARTY. IF SO,
THIS WOULD PUT EX-STRONGMAN ZUNIGA IN POSITION TO EMBARRASS AND
HARRASS BATRES ON DETAILS, MUCH AS EX-PRESIDENT CRUZ DID TO
HIS FONMIN, ALVARADO PUERTO, DURING ANTIGUA TALKS.
SANCHEZ

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